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ABSTRACT
              The approach to retirement in the Religious Community
is discussed as related to the Sister derived from her work as a
teacher, nurse, homemaker, or administrator. The problem of aging and
philosophies of many who are involved in the field of gerontology are
presented. (DB)

Attitudinal Development Toward Retirement

In A Religious Community

Institute For Vital Living
Siena Center
Racine, Wisconsin
Saturday, April 15, 1972
W. Dean Mason, Ed. D.

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How happy I was when Sister Pauline called me some weeks ago and suggested that I might share with you some thinking regarding attitudinal development toward retirement in a religious community. Her enthusiasm for life and her concern for others had drawn me into the circle of her friends when I was visiting in Milwaukee several months ago. I was ready and willing to accept a responsibility which would expose me to those of you who have found joy in living for others.

Needless to say, I was somewhat fearful of how I might develop a feeling of empathy or how I might relate in a meaningful way with a religious community be-cause, although my life has been committed to active social service through the church, it is not quite the same as that of a Catholic Sister facing the reality of retirement.

I come to you as one who is learning and trust that we will be able to "pool our thinking" in order that all older Americans can plan for continued living "after 65" because we have determined what society can expect and what we can expect of society - - till death do us part.

After accepting this responsibility of sharing with you some of my thinking rela-tive to retirement I thought that it would be good procedure to contact some of my friends who are a part of various religious orders throughout the country. And thus I wrote letters to several who are deeply involved in mutual concerns related to aging. One such friend, Sister Laurice, who is the Director, Health Services for the Aging, The Catholic Hospital Association, St. Louis, Mo. very graciously sent to me the Proceedings of the Institute on Planning for Pre-Retirement and Retirement of Religious. I have read this book in detail and received a great deal of information concerning attitudes which various religious Orders have toward retirement.

It should be recognized that there is no single, agreed-upon definition of retirement and that retirement rates very, very widely, depending on what measure is used. For example, if any person not working full time all year was considered retired, it would be found that 87 percent of the men and 97 percent of the women 65 and over were retired in 1962. In contrast, if only those who had not worked at all during the year were considered it would be found that 64 percent of the men and 87 percent of the women were retired. The measure used for most of this analysis stands between those two extremes, that is, the proportion who did not work or worked less than six months full time. According to this measure, 83 percent of the men and 95 percent of the women were retired in 1962.

There is a concern for the growing numbers of retirees in our society. There is an evident concern for the increased number of older Sisters in religious communities. Many persons fear the prospect of retirement because as Senator Mondale has said, "... retirement to many becomes a time of personal crises and despair - - a time of being shunted aside and being made to feel useless, indeed even worthless - - a time of emptiness, depression, and helplessness."

Sister Margaret Mary, Coordinator, Gerontology Department, Oregon Gerontology Study and Training Center, Mt. Angel College, Mt. Angel, Oregon in a paper on Research on the Aging and Retired Sister in America, tells how she has frequently seen the loving solicitude which is lavished on the sick and older Sisters and has noted how Convents have spent vast amounts of money in providing the very best which is in their power for their older members. She says that in spite of this, it is well known that aging Sisters will fight "to keep going" and against "being put on the shelf". She feels that it would be challenging to learn the attitudes of those in charge of the older Sisters, as well as their own reactions. We need to know what things are being done to make these years ones of fulfillment - - happy and joyous in well-earned leisure, and, at the same time, productive in the Apostolate.

Sister Margaret Mary surveyed 146 Religious Communities representing a combined membership of more than 49,400. She tabulated 362 questionnaires from these 146 Religious Communities. I feel that it would be beneficial for us to note some of the statistical data obtained from this survey.

***87.7% indicated that "inability to function because of illness or old age" as reasons for the Sister's retirement.

***Over 700 Sisters who are in the retired (60-72 years) or aged (over 72 years) bracket were reported to be working part or full-time. This gives evidence that the Sisters seem to be staying in their original work as long as possible. A small percentage wor working in second careers of the Apostolate.

***61.7% indicated that information of retirement was communicated to the Sister by her superior and her Council; 17.8% that it was the outcome of discussion with the personnel worker, the principal of the school, etc. Only 4.8% said that it was a self-determined decision.

***Of 362 questionnaires received, 64.2% stated that there was no preparation for retirement in their Communities; 6.4% said they did not know of any and 4% gave no answer. Only 27.7% stated that there was such education. Many of those answering in the negative said such planning was either going on, or was hoped for in the near future.

***Of those who do have retirement education, 12.1% begin theirs in the novitiate, 4% have had theirs in middle life, and 36% list the years just prior to retirement as those in which preparation is given. No answer was given to this question by 54.4%.

***72.6% of the Communities have modified the daily schedule for the retired and aged.

***88.3% felt that more Religious should concern themselves with the Apostolate of the Aging. Only 45.5% would recommend this for their own groups.

***Convents training their Sisters to care for the aged and retired numbered 32.8%.

***Of the difficulties listed for the retired and aged Sister, the most frequently cited were loneliness, 64.1%; insecurity and being "out of things", 40.3%; being of no use, 28.5%; inability to do the work one has been doing, 34%; with depression, boredom, and fear 22.5%.

Your own Sister Pauline presented an excellent paper at the Institute on Planning for Pre-Retirement and Retirement of Religious in Chicago in May of 1968. I especially liked her admonition, "In this production-oriented and materialistic society, we must give time to some positive thinking upon the values of aging, to explore what the aging process has to say to each of us in the light of Faith and our own experience."

She went on to say, "True, age robs us and enriches. Yet it offers many compensations, many insights, often much peace, and certain fruits of wisdom. It brings new contributions, new hopes, fulfillments and perspectives. Aging must be recognized as a natural phase of our life; it enjoys its own dignity, its own privileges and character. If then, we accept aging as a normal phase of our life, it would seem only natural to integrate it into our whole scheme of life and search for its deeper meanings."

Thus you have been thinking seriously about pre-retirement and retirement for several years and I am sure there has been and is a great variety of thinking, both positive and negative, within the Religious, concerning the aging process.

It has been only since masses of people began outliving their jobs that retirement has become a matter of concern to society. Although the old, like the poor, have always been with us, it has only been since the mid-thirties that age-related obsolesence has become a national policy. Congress passed the Social Security Act in 1935 and the law stipulated that benefits could only be paid to people 65 and over who had practically no income from wages. Employers and labor unions alike accepted this age as a time when a man could be severed from his job, and, hence, "retirement" became a way of life for wage earners in practically all categories of employment from unskilled laborers to professional men and executives. Social planners are finally beginning to realize that retirement actually constitutes a career of its own; a career for which unique provisions for interpretation, training, deployment, and evaluation must be devised, accepted and implemented. They are becoming conscious of the needs to develop an older person's sub-culture, to provide new roles and to re-engage, to achieve social integration, to systematically study trends in retirement and to provide programs worthy of older adults.

Herbert J. Weiss who is chief of the Department of Psychiatry, Mt. Saini Hospital of Cleveland says, "The history of gerontology leads inevitably to the dictum that aging is a biological process with extensive social consequences. For many years, interest has been largely centered on these consequences and the accompanying economic considerations of providing money, food, and shelter, culminating in Social Security Act of 1935 and similar subsequent legislation. As research and study in the biological process of aging intensified, it was inevitable that attention would be directed toward the emotional and psychological aspects of the process. The increase in the total number of the aged brought with it an increase incidence of mental disorders which clogged the State Mental Hospital Systems and further compelled the attention of psychiatrists, who were being called upon by internists to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of those mental disorders in the aged that are the frequent accompaniment of physical disease."

These considerations of the physical phenomena of aging resulted in the familiar stereotype that aging is synonymous with deterioration and that the capacity to re-establish the homeostatic mechanisms of the body progressively failed as the years proceed. Psychiatrists, however, were quick to point out that one cannot separate this diminished capacity for physical adaptation from the older person's need to adapt psychologically to impaired physical function or to failing social resources. The problem of adaptation to a changing social culture, is largely, for the older person, a matter of social process and economic support, but adaptation to a changing internal process is a complex psychic experience involving every aspect of the individual's life history and personality development.

Dr. Weiss in a paper which he presented at the 17th Annual Conference on Aging at the University of Michigan in June of 1964, entitled, Changes in Physical and Mental Health as Related to Family Life, suggested that, "What constitutes age-appropriate behavior at any stage of development is likely to be culturally determined through behavior patterns prescribed by the social organization, or by value systems that accomplish the same purpose." Personality might be described as the sum of intrapsychic forces and structures in action with

culture. An attempt to understand aging by focusing only on external conditions to the exclusion of intrapsychic structures is absurdly one sided. We are accustomed, today, to describe these intrapsychic structures through a structural theory that encompasses both biological maturation and psychologically development in the terms of id, ego, and super ego. There is no direct expression of the id in any stage of life. (Id:= The unconscious part of the psyche, independent, of the sense of reality, logic or morality, but actuated by fundamental impulses toward fulfilling instinctual needs; the reservoir of psychic energy or libido(the instinctual craving or drive behind all human activities).) The term is an abstraction to describe the biological instinctual drive (libido and agression) characteristic of life, as well as the associated repressed conflicts arising from the pressure of those drives.

Since the pressure for gratification of these drives is persistent and timeless they are not changed by the aging process. What do change are the psychic structures through which the impulses of the drives reach consciousness, the physical apparatus for discharge and, of course, the external world. It is probable that the waning moments of life are accompanied by a waning of the drives, but during much of the aging process, and particularly the period that tells our therapeutic interests, the drives undergo not so much an attenuation but rather a deflection or regression which accounts for much of the symptomatic psycho pathology.

The clinical picture is therefore one in which there is direct expression of impulse. Hence, what reaches the ego from the id is not only diffuse and non-sublimated but must be dealt with by an ego undergoing alterations and constrictions. It is also self-evident that the aggressive drives are relatively intensified by the aging process, particularly by the loss of ego control and the increased self-interest of the older person. Instead of mellowing, he may become crotchety and explosive. Anger may be directly expressed, much as in early childhood, but if old personality traits are retrained the anger may be expressed in an increased stubbornness, evasiveness, and resistance.

The ego undergoes development throughout life and thus must be considered in the aging processes. The multiple functions of the ego are centered on its perception of internal and external stimuli, the integration of these stimuli in accordance with past experience, and the execution of behavior appropriate to the stimuli. One can thus immediately recognize that the ego's task is that of adaptation to the inner and outer worlds. In aging, the specific problems of the ego is adaptation to the progressive losses of the later years. The loss of physical capacities - diminished vision, hearing, memory, motor function - constricts all its functions and leads to progressive isolation and the damming up of the instinctual drives. The loss of status, especially in our future-oriented society, invariably leads to a loss of ego identity and self esteem. The loss of significant objects, in which so much psychic energy has been invested for so long, leads to an impoverishment of the ego, more importantly, deprives the ego of life forces that bind it together and organize its integrative function. Finally, the loss of motor capacity and avenues for discharge, such as work or recreation, blocks off the discharge of drives and leads to much of the behavioral disorders.

People require intrapersonal relationships to sustain emotional life at any stage of development. The nature of these relationships in the aged person will be sharply influenced by his personality development and ego structure, by organic disease, and by the changing world in which he finds himself. Although it is not possible to establish a single character type in the aged, certain features are so regularly encountered as to be considered predictable. Interactions with people are among the tasks of the ego, and at this time of life the ego's task seems largely concerned with obtaining narcissistic supplies and gratifications. The method of supply is largely a reinstatement of early forms of behavior, frequently by casting important people of his life, such as children and doctors in the roles of parental surrogates. At times the older person will demand that the others take over all decision-making or supply his needs; at other times he will jealously guard every bit of perogative and status.

Old age is not exempt from the psychopathology of early years, although aging does bring with it certain conditions that are fairly age-specific such as chronic organic brain disease.

Dr. Clark Tibbitts, Deputy Director, Office of Aging, Welfare Administration, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare says that "total understanding of older people requires that we see them as members of society and of the various social systems of which a society is composed. We grow, live, age, act, and react within a kinship group, neighborhood, community, economy, cultural system, and a society. At every stage of life, we are influenced by these systems in a complex of reciprocal relationship." We are all a part or interacting members of American society.

I would like to think of the "aging process" as a continuation of the "maturation process". Middle age has become identified as the turning point of maturity. Some of the physiological changes, which have had their onset earlier, become apparent. Most of us find that we have less energy, albeit increased capacity and sensitivity to the meaning of life. A marked rise occurs in the curve that describes the prevalence of long term disease and disability. All, or nearly so, become aware of the finiteness of life and see the eventual need to tailor interests and commitments to changing capacities and circumstances. Middle age, is thus, a period of self-assessment, of stock-taking, and a preparation for new or modified patterns of living.

Later maturity usually has its onset in a series of somewhat dramatic circumstantial alterations and further, usually gradual physiological changes. Most workers retire during the 7th or 8th decade of life, requiring freedom of energy and time for other pursuits. For many, retirement is induced by failing health which necessarily narrows the range of possible retirement activity. Close of the work career is usually accompanied by a sharp reduction of income. Later maturity is as difficult as middle age to characterize in general terms. The marked changes widely experienced, are, nevertheless, unevenly distributed, and as Reichard has shown, there is a great diversity of reactions to them.

The final period, old age, is now commonly defined as the period of dependency. Physical and mental decline renders most of those who reach it incapable of living without assistance. Activity is greatly curtailed. What remains seems to consist largely of preoccupation with one's self, thinking of the past, search for meaning

in life, and preparation for death. Old age is, perhaps, the first stage of later life in which most people require more of a variety of highly specialized services. We should note that aging is by no means wholly a process of loss. In many respects, middle age and later maturity brings continued growth, and in some areas compensations and opportunities which are not common through the earlier stages of life.

Retirement has been noted as one of the major phenomena of aging. Having a period of retirement following the work career is now a part of our way of life, but its acceptance is not yet complete. The work ethic is still strong, and having gainful employment is the best assurance of an adequate income in the latter years. Declining health and energy are given as the principal factor in retirement with employer policy and layoff falling well behind. There is evidence of growing readiness to retire voluntarily while health is still good and while a person is able and has time to enjoy his leisure. Current studies are showing that assurance of adequate income in retirement is important in the decision making of many older workers. I am sure this would not be as evident in the Religious. One of the reversals in thinking produced by gerontological research is that retirement does not result in declining health. Indeed declining health more often preceeds retirement, and health is just as likely to improve during the early years of retirement as it is to decline further.

Theoretically, retirement opens a wide door to a host of new activities. Many people plan their retirement careers and find a good deal of satisfaction through established agencies and organizations in their communities or in the growing retirement meccas. Others are being attracted to new opportunities many communities are offering through adult education, activity centers, and senior clubs and other organizations created by or especially addressed to retired people. Available evidence, however, indicated that, proportionately, the number of retired people who participate actively is rather small. Such studies as there are tend to show that visiting, reading newspapers and magazines, watching television, gardening, and sewing, are the activities in which older people most commonly engage. The majority seem to increase their involvement

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in earlier roles and not to develop new ones. It is suggested that society has
not yet developed expectations for older people. In the absence of roles defined
by society, many persons, confronted for the first time with totally free choice
of activities, may lack the necessary resoursefulness or experience and do not
know where to turn. Poor health, lack of energy, and limited mobility are
certainly compelling factors for many people, and insufficient income for proper
nutrition and clothing and for bus fares and membership fees no doubt deters or
prohibits others from taking part in social, recreational, and creative activities
that some find particularly engaging. The desire to disengage from responsi-
bilities and activities and to spend increasing time in contemplation may also
have intrinsic appeal.

Professor Irving Rosow, of Western Reserve University, deals with the
position of older people in an article entitled, "Old age: One Moral Dilemma of
an Affluent Society". Professor Rosow points out that the older people in modern
society have little basis on which they stake a claim for recognition status. They
have little or no strategic knowledge, little property except the home in which
they live, no extraordinary religious ties (as some enjoyed in preliterate
societies). They are wage and salary workers not free to choose their own
retirement time, live in anonymous urban communities or are stranded in
declining small towns, have reached the stage of accelerated physical and mental
decline, and are not valued in a rapidly changing, future-oriented culture which
accords the highest value to youth. The Professor also notes the absence of
the liberal tradition which has led Western Europeans to provide much more
adequately for their older population.

Dr. Wilma Donahue speaks of the psychological potentials in senescence.
Says Dr. Donahue, "Any evaluation of the older individual's potential for living
must take into account the needs to be satisfied and the limitations to satisfying
them which stems from the decreasing capacities and functions of the biopsychologi-
cal organisms. In other words, what does the individual want in the senescent
phase of life, and, knowing his wants, can he satisfy them either directly or
vicariously? Maturation of the organisms naturally forces certain changes in

the life circumstances of the individual and hence affects his motivation. From youth's almost complete absorption with self-realization, the maturing personality shifts goals and interests from self to family and career, to attaining success, to improvement of the broader community, to appraisal of the general meaning of life, and finally to the relationship of his own life to the whole. In spite of the apparent depersonalization of interests and goals and seeming withdrawal of instrumental relationships with people and the community, there is evidence that the desire for continued growth of the personality is a persisting motivation throughout life. Buhler calls this a need for expansion; Kuhlen describes it as the growth-expansion motive which includes the need for achievement, power, creativity, and self-actualization. Buhler and Kuhlen agree that these motives are more powerful determiners of behavior up to middle age than after it. "

In at least three ways work is meaningful in men's lives. Economically, it provides the necessities of life and gives the bread winner a unique social role. Socially, work is a primary determinate of status and is a source of meaningful social relationships and social recognition. Personally, work seems to be related to well-being and self-respect. Because work is so crucial for men's lives, the loss of work through retirement can be a most critical change in the lives of older persons.

David L. Ellison in the Autumn 1968 issue of The Gerontologist suggests, "in order to reduce the impact of retirement, substitutes must be found for the economic, social, and psychological functions of work. Pensions to some degree substitute for the economic function, but the social and psychological functions may require changes in attitudes. When leisure becomes an enjoyable part of living, for all levels of society these attitudes may be changed and the prognosis associated with retirement improved. When retirement is viewed as an "impaired role," it is likely that the circle of despair might be broken and the retired role be viewed as an opportunity. Such a re-definition can have profound effect upon the illness behavior of the aged."

Work is the major link between the individual and the social group and deter-mines not only the individual's social status but provides a focus for a great deal

of his psychological functioning. The ideology of work is deeply embedded in the Protestant ethic which has shaped the outlook of Anglo-Saxon and Nordic countries. I am inclined to believe that it is even more deeply imbedded in the Catholic Religious ethic. It is difficult, for a member of modern technological society to achieve psychological adjustment without an occupation. So central is work to individual adjustment that occupational therapy has now become a major method of rehabilitation after all forms of disability. Unemployment is regarded as a major social evil; leisure as a problem; and premature retirement as a personal tragedy, something we must avoid as long as possible and cushion with carefully prepared plans. We take all of this so much for granted that the attitudes of the Greeks, who regarded work as a bone and leisure as the necessary basis of the good life, has become unintelligible to all but the small minority of persons with classical educations.

Robert C. Atchley questions whether leisure roles can fill the void left by work. He says that there is little doubt that leisure can fill the time formerly occupied by work, but the problem is whether leisure is capable of giving the individual the kind of self-respect and identity that he got from the job.

S. J. Miller speaks of the identity crisis theory. He has a rather negative outlook but I share some of his thoughts with you.

The following two pages include a direct reprint from an article, "Retirement and Leisure Participation: Continuity or Crises" by Robert T. Atchley, taken from the Spring 1971, Part I, issue of The Gerontologist.

The Identity Crisis Theory - Perhaps the most articulate and repeatedly quoted spokesman on the negative side is Miller (1965) who has taken the following position: (1) Retirement is basically degrading because although there is an implication that retirement is a right that is earned through life-long labor, there is also a tacit understanding that this reward is being given primarily to coax the individual from a role he is no longer able to play. (2) Occupational identity invades all of the other areas of the person's life. Accordingly, the father and head of household roles, the friend role, and even leisure roles are mediated by the individual's occupational identity. (3) The identity that comes from work is related to deeply ingrained values as to which roles can give a legitimate identity.

4. Leisure roles cannot replace work as a source of self-respect and identity because it is not supported by norms that would make this legitimate. That is, the retired person does not *feel justified* in deriving self-respect from leisure. Leisure is simply not defined as a legitimate source of self-respect by the general population.

5. Beyond the simple need to be doing something there is a need to be engaged in something that is defined by most people as utilitarian or gainful in some way. Thus, the stamp collector must emphasize the financial rewards, paintings are offered for sale, or woodworking is confined to immediately "useful" objectives. In short, the only kinds of leisure that can provide identity are work-substitutes.

6. There is a stigma of "implied inability to perform" that is associated with retirement and carried over into all of the individual's remaining roles and that results in an identity breakdown.

7. Identity breakdown involves a process whereby the individual's former claims to prestige or status are invalidated by the implied inability to perform, and this proves embarrassing for the stigmatized person. Miller calls this result "the portent of embarrassment."

8. Embarrassment leads to the individual's withdrawal from the situation or prevents him from participating to begin with.

9. The answer lies not in inventing new roles for the aging, but rather in "determining what roles presently exist in the social system . . . offering vicarious satisfactions, that can reduce the socially debilitating loss accompanying occupational retirement."

10. Miller implies that creating an ethic which would make full-time leisure an acceptable activity for a worthwhile person is a possible way to resolve the dilemma of the retired leisure participant.

Miller's analysis of the situation is an insightful one. Nevertheless, it rests on the assumption that prior to retirement the individual derived his identity primarily from his jobs. Also implied in Miller's identity crisis theory is the assumption that most people want to stay on the job, since this is their main identity, and that therefore most retirement is involuntary. This is no doubt related to the fact Miller leaves out of his discussion those who retired voluntarily. Miller also implies that he subscribes to the activity theory of adjustment to aging since he assumes that lost roles need to be replaced (Havighurst, 1963).

Evidence Concerning Identity Crisis

There are several sets of questions which thus emerge from an examination of the identity crisis theory presented by Miller. First, is his portrayal of the relationship between involuntary retirement and leisure an accurate one? Second, is the pattern,. even if accurate, typical of most older leisure participants? Third, what is the pattern among those who are voluntarily retired? Data from recent studies of retired people can shed some light on these questions.

Some of these data will be drawn from the Scripps Foundation Studies in Retirement, a series that has produced several published reports (Atchley, 1967, 1969; Cottrell, 1970; Cottrell & Atchley, 1969) and which is still continuing.[2]

1. Retirement has been found to result in a loss of a sense of involvement, *but this was unrelated to other self-concept variables of optimism and autonomy* (Back & Guptill, 1966).

Disengagement theory tells us to expect some withdrawal from involvement, and it is noteworthy that this loss of involvement does not appear to have adverse results for other aspects of the self-concept. This leads to skepticism concerning Miller's "portent of embarrassment."

2. Strong work-orientation *is* frequently found among retired people, but this is *not* accompanied by anxiety, depression, dislike of retirement, or withdrawal from activity (Cottrell & Atchley, 1969).

Our findings indicate that a strong positive orientation toward work *"exists* apart from the job itself but . . . has no *import for the individual* apart from the job itself." In terms of adjustment, there was apparently *no* negative result from carrying a positive orientation toward work into retirement.

3. When men retired from upper-white-collar, middle-status, and semi-skilled jobs were compared, it was found that the upper-white-collar people had internalized occupationally-oriented norms. Middle-status workers were oriented toward specific tasks and situations often resulting in the acquisition of skills that were transferable to leisure situations. Semi-skilled workers were engaged mainly in activities oriented about things (Simpson, Back & McKinney, 1966).

Of these occupational strata, the upper-white-collar stratum comes closest to Miller's model of the retired person. These are work-oriented people. However, neither of the other two strata

fit the work-oriented model. Middle-status people develop skills on the job that carry over into other roles. Thus, the salesman may carry his smooth-talking style over into his leisure roles. Semi-skilled people are oriented around the job, but not necessarily because they have any deep abiding commitment to the job. For them it may be purely a matter of not having been trained for anything *other than* a job.

4. The *style* of work activities tends to remain dominant in retirement.

Simpson et al. (1966) found that upper-white-collar jobs were oriented about *symbols*, middle-status jobs were oriented around *people*, and semi-skilled jobs were oriented around *things*. The middle-status people showed the greatest continuity in style from pre- to post-retirement. This suggests that retirement, and leisure roles in particular, offers greater opportunities for practicing interpersonal skills than for practicing skills oriented around symbols or things.

The implication of this finding is that it is not so much the *ethic* learned on the job that interferes with successful pursuit of leisure in retirement but rather the skills. Those who learn job-skills that cannot be readily used in leisure pursuits have a hard time adjusting to an increase in leisure unless they have had the opportunity to learn these skills elsewhere. This concept is reinforced by the finding that in terms of retirement activities middle-status people who had thing-oriented jobs resembled the semi-skilled more than they did their middle-status peers.

5. In addition, data from retired railroaders indicate that there are continuities in the situations people face that minimize the impact of retirement (Cottrell, 1970). Family, friends, church, and other roles continue despite retirement. Cottrell's data suggest that the portent of embarrassment and loss of identity is minimized by the tendency to select friends on the job from among those of one's own age. The end results of this process is to create *retirement cohorts* of people who have known each other on the job and who retire together. In the Scripps Foundation studies of retirement this phenomenon has been observed among those retired from occupations as diverse as teacher, railroader, and telephone operator (Atchley, 1967; Cottrell, 1970; Cottrell & Atchley, 1969). It results in a group of retired friends who have known each other for years and whose concepts of each other involve a great deal more than the mere playing of an occupational role. Nevertheless, this group is also capable of sustaining the pres-

tige gained on the job because they know all about how this prestige was generated.

To the extent that older people are geographically mobile, they might tend to lose these continuities, but most retired people, particularly the semi- or unskilled, do not move away from their place of long-term residence (Riley & Foner, 1968).

6. Cottrell's data (1970) also indicate that as the concept of retirement is incorporated into the culture, the tendency to look upon work as a temporary part of life increases.

The implication here is that if work is not a permanent part of life, then one puts greater emphasis on other parts of life that are more permanent. For example, if a man knows the day he begins working that he will work 25 years and then quit, he is very likely to avoid letting work become an all-consuming part of his life.

7. In terms of ethic, it is not at all clear whether most people regard work as a necessary prerequisite for making leisure legitimate or simply as a necessary economic function which interferes with the pursuit of leisure. It *is* quite clear that our heritage has always included those who did not work because they could afford not to. Accordingly, legitimacy of leisure may rest not so much on work as on the idea that the money used to sustain leisure came from a legitimate source, that is, it was either earned by working or inherited. In the Scripps Foundation studies of retirement many middle-income retired people have shown not the slightest reluctance to embrace leisure roles, given the fact that their income was secure (Atchley, 1967; Cottrell & Atchley, 1969). Perhaps if most retired people were not pauperized by retirement the "portent of embarrassment" mentioned by Miller would fade away.

8. Nearly two-thirds of retired men retired as a result of their own decision. *Less than 1 in 5* was retired involuntarily as a result of reaching retirement age (Cottrell & Atchley, 1969; Riley & Foner, 1968).

By leaving out those in poor health and those who voluntarily retired, Miller (1965) effectively limited the group he was talking about to less than a third of the retired men and an even smaller proportion of the retired women.

The editor of the Gerontologist in the Spring 1971 issue said, "Retirement is eagerly sought by some older Americans in modern America. For others, retirement is the despicable goal. And, then there are those who neither seek retirement nor hide from it. Some Americans ease into their retirement phase of life, other Americans are abruptly thrust or abruptly thrust themselves into retirement. Some will have wealth; many more will live by poverty standards, and, even more will be found within these economic extremes. Some with great skills and knowledge will lose the opportunity to practice them; others will find different, more challenging opportunities in a second or third career."

Most retirees share to a varying degree certain select happenings which lead to an individual attitudinal and behavioral change within a changing society iteslf. For some, the loss of work is difficult to accept, while for others the loss of human associations which accompanied work apparently has the greater significance.

The pioneering research of Cumming and Henry (1961) which produced the theory of disengagement presents a penetrating analysis of the changes in roles and life styles which are engendered by retirement and aging.

This work has produced a great controversy among gerontologists who are split over whether retirement and aging explain disengagement as a natural process or the product of a faulty culture which has not yet developed a value system which enhances post-labor living.

The "disengagement theory" of aging was originally proposed as a systematic alternative to the loosely formulated and implicit "activity theory". The latter suggested that for optimal adjustment, social growth and expansion should continue as much as possible from middle age into old age. Cumming and Henry questioned this assumption of the value of extended activity and suggested contrariwise that a social and psychological withdrawal may be the sine qua non of successful aging.

The theory of disengagement has received considerable attention since its formulation and it appears to have much value in accounting for the patterns manifested by society and its aged members. The major proposition of the theory, as originally presented is that with advancing age, there is a simultaneous

and mutual withdrawal of the individual and the social system of which he has been a part. It has been pointed out that the fundamental premise of the theory is not that mutual withdrawal occurs but that "the society and the individual prepare in advance for the ultimate 'disengagement' of incurable, incapaciting, disease and death by an inevitable, gradual, and mutually satisfying process of disengagement."

Given the attributes of the American social system and the modal physical and psychological effects of aging, the authors of the theory contend that disengagement is functional for both the individual and society. This formulation is held to be in contrast to what has been called the "implicit theory of aging", which conceives of "successful" adjustment during the latter years as the maintenance of a pattern of social and psychological adaptation similar to that of middle age. Disengagement implies the development of a new equilibrium between the individual and society in which mutual bonds are looser and in which the individual is less bound by normative control.

In the formal statement of disengagement theory, Cumming and Henry present the following as one of nine postulates, "When both the individual and society are ready for disengagement, complete disengagement results. When neither is ready, continuing engagement results. When the individual is ready and society is not, a disjunction between the expectations of the individual and of members of his social system result, but usually engagement continues. When society is ready and the individual is not, the results of the disjunction is usually disengagement."

Let us think for a moment about the "activity theory of aging". This may be called the "common sense" and lay theory of aging, since it reflects the expectations most often reflected in newspaper columns, and even legislative programs directed to old age. As reflected in the earliest social-psychological survey of aging, disorientation can be summed up as follows: The American formula for happiness in old age might be summed up in the phrase, "keep active"... concluding from this public opinion study we should say that the American society desires and expects a good deal of activity and independence from its older people... We want them to be fairly active. We do not want them to isolate themselves and merely vegitate.

This view of aging implies that, except for the inevitable physiological changes
associated with growing old, older people are the same as middle-aged people;
i.e., they have essentially the same psychological and social needs. The de-
creased social interaction that characterizes old age results from the withdrawal
by society from the aging person - retirement, widowhood, and the death of friends -
are constrictions of his social world over which he had no control. In this view,
the decrease in inneraction proceeds against the desire of most aging men and
women. The older person who successfully copies with this social decrement
is the person who stays active and who manages to resist the shrinkage of his
social world. The activity theory suggests that the relationship between the
social system and the personal system does not change markedly as an individual
passes from the age status of middle age into the status of old age. The person
is still expected to do much the same as he did in the middle years with the
exception that he is allowed not to work (whether he wants to or not) and he is
expected to "slow down a little". The sources of satisfaction, his self-concept,
and life-style are not expected to change much from what they were in middle
years.

A very different perspective is presented by Cumming and Henry in the dis-
engagement theory of aging. Here the aging process is seen as a mutual and
inevitable "disengaging" of the individual in society. The individual gradually
withdraws socially as well as psychologically from this environment as he moves
into old age. Most importantly, the process of withdrawal is a mutually satisfying
one. For the individual, this withdrawal releases him from the societal pressures
for instrumental performance that tax a weakening body. For the society, this
withdrawal allows younger (and, presumably more energetic and confident) individ-
uals to assume the functional role.

Cumming and Henry presented data to indicate that there is a measurable
decrease in the individual's psychological engagement, or ego-involvement in
the external environment. They interpreted their data to mean, that associated
with this generally low level of social engagement and ego-involvement in the
external world is a high level of psychological well-being, or as they defined it,
"morale". Old age is different from middle age, marked by substantial shifts -

and eventually a new equilibrium of forces - in the social and personal systems. The sources of psychological well-being in old age, for example, are much different than middle age, when they were much more dependent on continued and face-to-face interaction with others in the social environment.

Perhaps the most clear indication of the limitations of both the activity and disengagement theories of aging comes from the work of Havighurst and Neugarten on Patterns of Aging. Here it is clear that neither model accounts for the inperical relationship of social activity, personality types, and psychological well-being. As summarized by Neugarten: "People, as they grow old, seem to be neither at the mercy of the social environment nor at the mercy of some set of intrisic processes - in either instance, inexorable changes that they cannot influence. On the contrary, the individual seems to continue to make his own "impress" upon the wide range of social and biological changes. He continues to exercise choice and to select from the environment in accordance with his own long-established needs. He ages according to a pattern that has a long history, and that maintains itself, with adaptation, to the end of life."

Eric Fromm states that all human beings have five basic needs above and beyond the physiological ones relating to hunger, thirst, sex, etc. These psycho-social needs persist through the life cycle. (1) The first of these universal needs is the need for a sense of identity. This need for identity is so vital and so imperative that unless one can develop this sense of identity, it is impossible to really be sane. A sense of identity encompasses my sense of how I am unique, it answers the question: Who am I? What am I? How am I different from all other beings? As we grow older, we gain other sources of identity and drop some of the initial ones. (2) Fromm's second psychological need is the need for relatedness, a need for belonging. Not only does an individual need to know what is unique about himself and different from other people, but he needs to also know how he is like other people. (3) Fromm's third psychological need is the need for rootedness. Psychologists tell us that probably one of the most traumatic events in a person's life is the very first event when one is thrust from the mother's womb and must become an independent, functioning entity

after having begun life as a dependent symbiotic part of the mother. Some psychologists tell us that all through life there is this real ambivolence as to whether we truly want to be independent, functioning people, or whether we prefer the security of the dependent relationship; whether we want to be independent, mastering people, or dependent occupants of the womb, at least symbollically. (4) Fromm's fourth need is the need for transcendence, which is a more abstract concept. According to Fromm we have a need for somehow to transcend the fact of our own time-limited existence. Man is the only animal who can project himself down through time and see his own end. (5) The fifth and final need as Fromm sees it, is the need for a frame of organization, a frame of reference. Some may call it a religious belief or philosophy of life. Whatever you select or whatever you choose, there has to be some system of explanation that you have, to explain things which seem to have no explanation.

Again, I would like to quote Sister Pauline, "A complete concept of the retired Sister's nature must take into account all the levels of reality, not only the physical but the riches of her intelligence, her intuition for mystery, her tendency to inwardness and contemplation, her capacity for selfless love and the hunger of her being for total dedication. Each Sister must be recognized as an individual, unique and distinct, identified by her past, in the present and the future, respected as a member of a total Community who continues to contribute to and participate in its life and work in the role Providence has designed for her."

"The Religious Community must be cognizant of the fact that whatever feelings of usefulness and purpose, of worth and creative satisfaction, the Sister derived from her work as a teacher, nurse, homemaker, or administrator have been displaced, and she is faced with the necessity of finding new sources of satisfaction in the different life retirement requires her to make for herself. The degree to which we preserve the dignity and self-esteem of the retiring Sister by helping her accept limitations as a natural human phenomenon, which need not destroy her usefulness, is a more potent factor for successful adjustment to retirement than we realize. When we come to the full knowledge

of these levels of reality, our overall problem of retirement will narrow tremendously. Compulsory retirement will become normal retirement, looked forward to and accepted as an open door to new vistas, to a richer and fuller life, a capstone to life. A successful retirement doesn't just happen. "

We become a part of the answer - as we discover how to "age successfully" - how to retire with dignity, grace and purpose. We join hands and hearts with a concerned society, an understanding church for as we read in the New Catholic Encyclopedia; "The National Council of Catholic Charities for years has promoted studies, conferences and workshops on the aged and their needs and has cooperated with other groups in planning better services for them - - - seeking to provide material help and endeavoring to allay the feelings of frustration and insecurity experienced by many of the aging".

It has been said that every speaker advocating truth should adjure his hearers as did Socrates his in Athens. "If you will be persuaded by me, pay little attention to me, but much more to the truth, and if I appear to you to say anything true, assent to it, but if not, oppose me with all your might, taking good care that in my zeal I do not deceive both myself and you, and like a bee depart, leaving my sting behind. " A decade later, his pupil, Plato, softened this a bit and these words are applicable today; "truth is the beginning of every good thing, both in heaven and on earth; and he who would be blessed and happy should be from the first a partaker of truth, for then he can be trusted. "

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